

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Cancelled).

2(Previously presented). An isolated polynucleotide encoding a hyperthermostable protease comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

3(Original). The polynucleotide according to claim 2, which comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

Claim 4 (Cancelled).

5(Original). A method for preparing a hyperthermostable protease, comprising culturing a transformant containing the polynucleotide of claim 2, and harvesting a hyperthermostable protease from the culture.

Claim 6 (Cancelled)

7(Currently amended). An isolated polynucleotide encoding a hyperthermostable protease comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: [[6]] 5.

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Reply to Office Action of August 7, 2003

8(Original). The polynucleotide according to claim 7, which comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:6.

Claim 9(Cancelled).

10(Previously presented). A method for preparing a hyperthermostable protease, comprising culturing a transformant containing the polynucleotide of claim 7, and harvesting a hyperthermostable protease from the culture.

Claims 11 and 12 (Cancelled).